Met Office

July 2011

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1981-2010.

UK Overview

After a generally fine, warm first few days, the weather became unsettled. With low pressure close by, it was rather cool with showers and periods of rain, heavy and prolonged at times across northern areas. A brief settled interlude towards mid-month was followed by a return to low pressure and cool, unsettled conditions. The last week saw temperatures recover and drier weather, but still with plenty of cloud at times.

It was a rather cool month overall, with mean temperatures ranging from about 1 °C below average over England and Wales to about 0.5 °C below over Scotland, making this the coolest July since 2000. With several chilly nights, in terms of minimum temperature it was the coldest July across the UK since 1980. Overall, monthly rainfalls were typically close to the July averages but with significant regional variation. It was wet in a broad swathe from north-east England across eastern Scotland with about twice the average in places. In contrast, Orkney and the Western Isles had a relatively dry month with about half of the normal amount. It was also drier than average across parts of the Midlands. Sunshine totals were generally close to or somewhat below average, especially across parts of southern England, but it was a particularly sunny month in south-western Scotland.

A maximum temperature of 27.4 °C was recorded at Hartpury College (Gloucestershire) on the 25th. A minimum temperature of -0.8 °C was recorded at Kinbrace (Highland) early on the 13th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 on the 18th, 96.0 mm of rainfall was recorded at Capel Curig (Conwy). A wind gust of 58 mph was recorded at Needles Old Battery (Isle of Wight) on the 8th.

Weather Impacts

On the 8th and 9th, heavy downpours resulted in flash flooding in parts of Edinburgh. On the 10th, torrential downpours delayed the Scottish Open golf championships at the Castle Stuart course near Inverness after flooding and a small landslip on the first fairway. Weather conditions were also far from ideal for The Open golf at the Royal St Georges course in Kent around mid-month, with blustery winds and some rain.

Over the weekend 16th - 17th, homes and roads in the Inverness and Perth areas were flooded after almost 24 hours of heavy rain. Flooding also affected some train services in the Glasgow area. On the 21st, showers interrupted the cricket at Lord's as England took on India in the first Test, with play abandoned after tea.

England diary of highlights

A mixture of cool unsettled weather, with some heavy rain in places, and warmer fine spells. Mean temperatures were generally about 1 °C to 1.5 °C below the 1981-2010 average and it was the coolest July since 2000. With several chilly nights, in terms of minimum temperature it was the coldest July since 1980. Rainfall was generally close to the July average, but it was wetter than normal in Northumberland and Durham and drier across parts of the Midlands. Sunshine amounts were somewhat below average, and it was notably dull across many southern areas.

1st to 5th

High pressure dominated the first few days with plenty of fine, settled weather. Temperatures were close to normal before gradually rising and peaking at 27.3 °C on 5th at Gravesend (Kent). There were some chilly nights, with the temperature falling below 5 °C in many western areas on the mornings of 1st and 2nd. By the end of the period, cloud and rain started to spread in from the west, heralding a change to more changeable weather.

6th to 10th

An area of low pressure gradually moved eastwards across the UK, introducing cooler and much more unsettled weather. Periods of persistent, heavy rain gave locally high totals; Walney Island (Cumbria) recorded 38.8 mm in 12 hours on 8th. There were also some heavy, thundery showers during the period. Temperatures still managed to exceed 20 °C on most days, with 23.0 °C at Coleshill (Warwickshire) on 9th and 24.2 °C at Gravesend on 10th.

11th to 15th

There were some showers and rain during this period, but it was generally much drier than the previous few days. Sunshine was at a premium though and with most parts staying generally cloudy, it was rather cool for the time of year. There were a few sunnier spells, mainly in the south and south-east, and these allowed temperatures to exceed 22 °C quite widely on 14th and 15th with 25.3 °C at Heathrow (London) on 15th.

16th to 23rd

There was a return to unsettled weather associated with an unusually deep area of low pressure tracking eastwards across the UK. This brought strong winds, rain and thundery showers to many places. Towards the end of the period, the showers became more confined to the east with other areas seeing more sunshine. Most of the period was cooler than normal for July; on 18th, much of the south-west stayed below 14 °C.

24th to 31st

A trend to more settled weather occurred during the last week. There was still a good deal of cloud at times, but some long sunny periods developed. Temperatures gradually rose during the period, exceeding 21 °C in many places with 26.6 °C at Bramham (West Yorkshire) on 28th and 26.8 °C at Sutton Bonington (Nottinghamshire) on 31st.

Wales diary of highlights

A mixture of warm settled weather and cool unsettled spells, with some heavy rain in places. Mean temperatures were generally about 1 °C below the 1981-2010 average. With several chilly nights, in terms of minimum temperature it was the coldest July since 1980. Rainfall was near or above average in most areas; sunshine were generally close to the July average.

1st to 4th

A fine start to the month with light winds and pleasantly warm by day with plenty of sunshine, but the nights were chilly with a low of 3.4 °C at Sennybridge (Powys) early on 2nd. By 4th the nights had become warmer as a southerly breeze developed along with patchy cloud.

5th to 9th

An unsettled few days as rain edged east during 5th to be followed by brighter conditions with some sharp showers. Further rain arrived from the south-west later on 6th, accompanied by strong winds. Rain or showers, heavy and thundery in places, occurred from 7th to 9th with strong winds at times. During this period the days were generally cooler but the nights were quite mild.

10th to 14th

A steady rise of pressure brought a return to generally settled conditions with sunny spells by day but the nights became chilly again under clear skies with mist and fog patches; Sennybridge recorded 2.0 °C early on 14th. There were a few mostly light showers but on the afternoon of 12th thunderstorms developed over Pembrokeshire.

15th to 20th

A deep area of low pressure moving slowly across the north of the UK brought an unseasonably cool, cloudy, wet and windy spell especially from 16th to 18th. The rain was often heavy with Capel Curig (Conwy) recording 96 mm in the 24 hours to 0900 on 18th. It was particularly cool on 18th with maxima widely around only 13 to 14 °C.

21th to 31th

Rather changeable weather prevailed for the remainder of the month with rain or showers. However, amounts were mostly small and several days were dry and bright. It became warmer with maximum temperatures often above 20 °C, including 24.6 °C at Usk (Monmouthshire) on 26th and 23.2 °C at Milford Haven (Pembrokeshire) on 27th.

Scotland diary of highlights

Alternating warm, settled weather and cooler spells with periods of rain and showers, some heavy and thundery. Mean temperatures were generally about 0.5 °C below the 1981-2010 average. With several chilly nights, in terms of minimum temperature it was the coldest July since 1993. It was a wet month across many eastern areas, from the Borders to Inverness, with about twice the average, or more, in places. In contrast, it was a relatively dry month in Orkney and the Western Isles with only about half of the normal amount. Sunshine amounts were well above average in the west, but it was rather dull near the east coast. Western Scotland enjoyed one of the sunniest Julys in the series from 1929.

1st to 4th

Apart from a few isolated light showers, this period was dry with long clear or sunny spells. The temperature reached 23.6 °C at Aviemore (Highland) on 3rd.

5th to 11th

Thickening cloud brought rain north-eastwards on 5th, although many parts remained fine with Charterhall (Borders) recording 22.9 °C. Rain affected many places on 6th, heaviest over Fife, Perth and Kinross and south Aberdeenshire with Braemar (Aberdeenshire) recording 33.8 mm in 12 hours. Sunny spells and showers on 7th, with some showers being heavy and thundery, especially in the south. Drier and warmer in the north, Kinloss (Moray) reaching 20.3 °C. Further heavy showers on 8th with isolated thunderstorms, and flash flooding was reported in Edinburgh; Kinloss recorded 14.4 mm of rain between 7pm and 8pm. Sunny spells on 9th, with heavy thundery showers, mainly in the north and east. The 10th and 11th were again showery, some heavy and thundery especially across the north and east, but it was mainly dry across the south-west.

12th to 14th

The showers transferred to Strathclyde, Stirlingshire and Lochaber on 12th, otherwise it was bright or clear. The 13th and 14th saw clear or sunny spells and it became warm, temperatures reaching 22 or 23 °C, with just a little rain in the north-west on 14th.

15th to 20th

A dry and sunny start to 15th but it clouded over with rain spreading from the west. There was persistent rain near the east coast on 16th, but it was brighter further west. Heavy, slow-moving thundery showers broke out, with 35.2 mm recorded at Strathallan (Perthshire) in 12 hours and reports of flooding in Perth. There were further heavy showers on 17th with isolated thunderstorms, and rain or showers again on 18th. Occasional rain and showers on 19th, these becoming heavy in the south-east; 13.6 mm was recorded in 1 hour at Leuchars (Fife) although it was mainly dry in the west. Rather cloudy with a few, mainly light, showers on 20th; brightest in the west.

21st to 31st

Bright on 21st and 22nd with some showers and the best of the sunshine in the south-west. Tiree (Argyll and Bute) recorded 15.3 hours of sunshine on 22nd. The 23rd was dry with sunny spells away from the north and north-east where it stayed cloudier and much cooler. Some patchy rain in the north-east on 24th, this heavy in Shetland, otherwise dry with sunny spells and very warm in the south. Light rain in the north-east on 25th, but dry and brighter elsewhere; contrasting temperatures, with maxima of 12.8 °C at Dyce (Aberdeen) and 23.5 °C at Bishopton (Glasgow). Dry on 26th; cloudy and cool again in the north, but sunny and warm elsewhere, with 22.7 °C at Bishopton. The 27th was also sunny and warm, with 25.0 °C at Aviemore, before rain arrived in the west in the evening. The 28th then remained rather cloudy everywhere with some outbreaks of light rain. It stayed dry on 29th and 30th, rather cloudy in the far north and north-east but with good spells of sunshine elsewhere. Aviemore reached 23.1 °C on 30th. The 31st was cloudier with a little rain, though the Moray Firth and the south-east become brighter and warmer later.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

A mixture of cool unsettled weather, with showers or longer outbreaks of rain, and warmer fine spells. Mean temperatures were 0.9 °C below the 1981-2010 average. With several chilly nights, in terms of minimum temperature it was the coldest July since 1974. Rainfall and sunshine amounts were close to average.

1st to 4th

The 1st was rather cloudy in the morning with patchy light rain but brighter with sunny spells in the afternoon. The 2nd and 3rd were dry with long clear or sunny spells, temperatures reaching 22.1 °C at Helen's Bay (County Down) on 3rd. It was dry and bright for much of 4th.

5th to 14th

Rain on 5th cleared to sunshine and showers. The 6th and 7th were showery, Lough Fea (County Tyrone) recorded 25.6 mm of rain in 12 hours on 7th. Sunny spells on 8th and 9th with fewer and lighter showers. Bright from 10th to 12th with scattered, locally heavy, showers on 10th and 12th. Mainly dry on 13th and 14th with clear or sunny spells, the temperature reaching 23.3 °C at Helens Bay on 14th.

15th to 18th

After a dry and bright start on 15th, cloud and rain spread from the west. Rain cleared early on 16th but it stayed rather cloudy with scattered showers, some heavy. Mainly cloudy on 17th with rain, heavy at times over Antrim. Cool, fresh north-westerly winds. Another cloudy, cool and breezy day on 18th with outbreaks of rain, but driest in Down and Armagh.

19th to 31st

Mainly dry on 19th, with some bright spells developing. Mainly cloudy with a few light showers on 20th and 21st. Sunshine and isolated showers on 22nd. The 23rd and 24th were dry with long sunny spells, and it was warm away from the north coast. Cloudy with occasional rain during the morning of 25th, then drier and brighter in the afternoon. It was dry on 26th, cloudier in the west but sunny in the east with Killowen (County

Down) reaching 22.3 °C. The 27th started bright and sunny, but thickening cloud and outbreaks of rain then arrived from the west. The rain cleared early on 28th, which stayed dry and bright but rather cloudy. The 29th and 30th were also dry and bright, with sunny spells in places, before rain spread eastwards on the evening of 30th, leading to a damp and cloudy end to the month.

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